
African Dialogue Joint Project on Consumer Protection through Consumer Education and Business Guidance

Date of proposal: March 7, 2018

Proposed Project Workplan

Leads Working Group of Joint Project:	Competition Authority of Kenya; Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria; Tanzania Competition Commission South Africa National Consumer Commission; U.S. Federal Trade Commission; Zambia Competition and Consumer Protection Commission; Egypt Consumer Protection Agency; South Africa National Consumer Tribunal; South African National Credit Regulator SADC Working Group; COMESA Competition Commission; ECOWAS
Contact Persons, email, phone numbers	
Background	<p>African Dialogue colleagues are committed to promoting collective consumer education and business guidance efforts. The goal of this project, is increased synergies among participating agencies with respect to information sharing, enforcement and consumer education/business guidance efforts..</p> <p>Consumer education helps to empower consumers to make informed choices and provides valuable information.</p> <p>Business guidance allows consumer protection authorities to provide legitimate businesses a roadmap to engage effectively in the marketplace.</p> <p>Both consumer education and business guidance can be effective tools for consumer authorities. The impact of these efforts can be even more powerful and reach across borders if coordinated among consumer authorities in the African Dialogue.</p> <p>African regional bodies such as SADC, COMESA, EAC and ECOWAS have recently prioritized competition and consumer protection and share many of the same goals.</p>
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify targeted areas of collaboration on consumer education and business guidance for cooperation among African Dialogue colleagues• Identify instruments (e.g. principles, codes, guides, or guidelines, etc.) which could be shared and customised for use by various regulators.• Share information regarding domestic and cross border enforcement priorities to reinforce common themes in targeted areas• Share possible frameworks, practical examples of consumer education and business guidance best practices (methods, resources and effects)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to understand the policy aspects of the linkages between consumer education, business guidance and enforcement • Organize Working Group Calls and webinars on targeted areas • Promote consumer education and business guidance materials- as a resource to consumers and businesses • Provide training and skills development to African Dialogue colleagues on how to access and develop consumer education and business guidance materials • Encourage African Dialogue colleagues to share experiences more broadly
Activity or activities to meet the objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach via email, webinars, and in-person meetings at workshops and conferences to encourage participation in the joint project • Circulate consumer education and business guidance repositories and lists to African Dialogue members periodically. • Post relevant information on agencies websites, ICPEN intranet and econsumer.gov and on other stakeholder websites • Translate existing consumer education and business guidance materials into English, French and certain African languages. • Webinar to provide training and demonstrate how to develop such materials • Develop educational videos to increase awareness of key issues <p>Notes: (i) This project supports and promotes coordinated enforcement actions as well as consumer education/business guidance efforts. (ii) The FTC will devote resources to sharing consumer education and business guidance materials, searching econsumer.gov for materials from other countries, reporting to African Dialogue colleagues on a bilateral or multilateral basis as needed based on the results of the review.</p>
Products / outputs	Joint lists/repository of consumer education and business guidance materials; Training Materials; Shared development of consumer education and business guidance materials; Posting materials to agency and stakeholder websites as well as econsumer.gov
Expected Outcome/ Impact (short, medium and long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term: increased sharing of consumer education and business guidance materials among African Dialogue colleagues; use of consumer education and business guidance materials from other countries • Coordination and development of African Dialogue consumer education and business guidance materials • Coordination of consumer education and business guidance messages after planned enforcement activities and sweeps • Long-term: increased consumer and business awareness in targeted areas; increased coordination among African Dialogue colleagues with regard to consumer education materials and

	<p>complaint data; development of consumer education and business guidance materials in key complaint categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine use and collective development of consumer education and business guidance materials by African Dialogue colleagues to support sweeps and enforcement actions 										
How will we know if the project has been successful and how will success be measured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from African Dialogue colleagues regarding the project content and subsequent use/benefits of project • African Dialogue colleagues will share consumer education and business guidance materials among each other and with other stakeholders • African Dialogue colleagues will develop collective consumer education and business guidance materials and publicly distribute them • African Dialogue colleagues use the developed materials when undertaking information sharing, sweeps and enforcement actions, whether the actions are undertaken through African Dialogue projects or by a single regulator • Increased number of consumer education materials filed by African consumers through econsumer.gov • African Dialogue colleagues present project and developed materials under the Zambian Presidency and in coordination with the efforts of regional bodies such as SADC, COMESA, ECOWAS and EAC • Sharing and development of materials that potentially contribute to increased synergy between consumer education and business guidance materials and enforcement efforts and that inspire African Dialogue colleagues to assess or adapt new practises. 										
Timeline: Please include expected timeline of key milestones (action items)	<p><i>What steps will the working group take, and when?</i></p> <p><i>What are the key project milestones?</i></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>March</i></td><td>Announce statement of intentions regarding joint project and collaboration with regional bodies on margins of African Dialogue meeting in Banjul, The Gambia</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>April</i></td><td>Identify targeted areas and announce agreement regarding specific targeted area of joint project on margins of ABA Antitrust Meeting in Washington, DC Gather and review consumer education and business guidance materials already existing on targeted areas</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>May</i></td><td>Present a webinar on Joint Projects Continue gathering and reviewing consumer education and business guidance materials already existing on targeted areas</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>June</i></td><td>Share consumer education and business guidance information in specific targeted areas</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>July</i></td><td>Expand consumer education and business guidance sharing and begin to develop collective materials</td></tr> </table>	<i>March</i>	Announce statement of intentions regarding joint project and collaboration with regional bodies on margins of African Dialogue meeting in Banjul, The Gambia	<i>April</i>	Identify targeted areas and announce agreement regarding specific targeted area of joint project on margins of ABA Antitrust Meeting in Washington, DC Gather and review consumer education and business guidance materials already existing on targeted areas	<i>May</i>	Present a webinar on Joint Projects Continue gathering and reviewing consumer education and business guidance materials already existing on targeted areas	<i>June</i>	Share consumer education and business guidance information in specific targeted areas	<i>July</i>	Expand consumer education and business guidance sharing and begin to develop collective materials
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		Outreach meeting at UNCTAD IGE in Geneva
	<i>August</i>	Outreach at workshops and conferences to African Dialogue colleagues who are not sharing consumer education and business guidance
	<i>September</i>	Develop or identify consumer education and business guidance materials for targeted complaint sharing areas
	<i>October</i>	Expand African Dialogue participants at ICPEN under Zambian Presidency Conduct consumer education and business guidance session at ICPEN in Zambia and at African regional body meetings (dates TBD)
	<i>November</i>	Expand consumer education and business guidance sharing
	<i>December</i>	Review consumer education and business guidance sharing accomplishments and discuss year ahead
	<i>January</i>	Conduct webinar on targeted areas using both subject matter content and the results of consumer education and business guidance sharing
	<i>February</i>	Consider recent enforcement actions and identify cases in targeted areas or reassess target areas to develop more consumer education and business guidance materials
	<i>March</i>	Compile one year report on consumer education and business guidance sharing in the African Dialogue Attend ICPEN meeting and regional meetings (dates TBD) to share experiences on joint project
Date of expected completion:		
Communications strategy:	<u>Internal:</u> Through emails (FTC, agencies, list serve, Conference, Working Group Leads) bilateral communications, publication on the ICPEN Intranet, regional body websites, econsumer.gov website, and webinar presentations <u>External:</u> For public materials, through agency websites, regional body websites, embassy websites, updates to the ICPEN and econsumer.gov websites as well as other stakeholders such as civil society and private sector	

Incoming Zambian ICPEN Presidency review and recommendations summary	The Incoming Zambian ICPEN Presidency is determined to allocate enough time for the project during the events and to work for increasing the benefits of the Project via the communication channels at its disposal. Thanks to its potential to empower consumers before and after taking enforcement action, this project is also considered to be a key instrument for achieving long-term objectives of the Network in terms of joint enforcement actions.
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End of project evaluation:

Overall Evaluation of Project - effectiveness	<i>This should measure the success of the project as set out against the indicators listed under "How will we know if the project has been successful and how will success be measured?" in the proposal above.</i>
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<p>Lessons learned to feed into any other African Dialogue projects</p>	<p><i>What lessons have we learned for future AD projects?</i> <i>For consumer education and business guidance associated with enforcement actions, what were the challenges you encountered?</i> <i>How did you overcome these challenges? What experience would you share with the AD Working Group who wishes to run joint projects in future?</i></p>
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